

# **Adult Bible Study**

## **Sunday, January 20, 2002**

### **The Church's Schools of Higher Education Prepare Strong Servants**

#### **Opening hymn:**

187 (LW) "When All The World Was Cursed" or 83 (LW) "O God of God, O Light of Light"

#### **Prayer:**

page 131 (LW) "For Seminaries and Church Colleges"

#### **Focus Statement**

God prepares future pastors and church workers for action in professional church work through a process that begins in Christian homes, continues in the local congregation and culminates in centres of higher education at the church's university or seminaries. The church's schools of higher education then prepare strong servants for the church. Strong Servants proclaim The Servant, Jesus Christ.

#### **The Servant**

1. Read the Old Testament Lesson for today: Isaiah 49:1-6. This is the second of four Servant Songs in Isaiah that prophesy about the Messiah. In the text, the Messiah is called to be a servant of the Lord. What is the mission of the servant (v.5 - 6)?
2. In verse 2 what does it mean that "He made my mouth like a sharpened sword?" See also Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12. Why might it be important to be educated in how to preach and teach the Word of God?
3. In verse 4, how does the Servant characterize his ministry? How does this characterize Jesus' ministry? What does verse 4 say will be the ultimate outcome?
4. You may be more familiar with the fourth Servant Song in Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12. Read Isaiah 53:3-7. How is the Servant of God also our servant? Why is the comparison of the Servant to a lamb particularly meaningful?
5. Read Isaiah 49:6 again. Does it sound familiar? Check out Luke 2:25-32. What is the significance of singing the Nunc Dimittis (Simeon's Song) after receiving Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of sins?

## **God's Servants Proclaim The Servant**

6. Read the Gospel Lesson for today: John 1:29-41. John proclaims Jesus to be “the Lamb, of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” What does John mean when he calls Jesus “the Lamb of God”? What does Andrew take it to mean? Can you see from our study of Isaiah how Andrew came to that conclusion?

7. Does John’s proclamation of Jesus sound familiar? What is the significance of singing the Agnus Dei before communing?

8. As a servant of God, what is John called to do (John 1:34; 1:6-9)? What happens as a result?

9. The disciples at first did not understand the nature of the ministry they were being called to. James and John requested Jesus to “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.” They were requesting positions of prestige and power. It then says “when the ten heard about this they became indignant with James and John.” Read Jesus’ response in Mark 10:42-45. What is the nature of ministry to be? How does Jesus show that He is the Messiah that Isaiah had prophesied of?

10. After the resurrection, Jesus commissioned the church to share in his mission of salvation. Read Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16 and Acts 1:8. As servants, what are the Apostles called to do and what is the church to be doing?

11. What makes God’s servants “strong”? (Romans 1:16; Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5; John 20:22-23; Matthew 26:27-28)

## **Strong Servants**

Pastors and Deacons are strong servants of the Lord when they realize they have no strength in themselves nor in any other thing but the Word of God and the Sacraments. As a church we confess:

So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and the sacraments as through instruments the Holy Spirit is given, who effects faith where and when it pleases God in those who hear the gospel, that is to say, in those who hear that God, not on account of our own merits but on account of Christ, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace on account of Christ. (Augsburg Confession, Article V).

Pastors serve by proclaiming to the world God’s strong Word, the testimony of The Servant who has redeemed us by His sacrifice on the cross for our sins. God’s servants are strong when they point people to the Word and Sacraments

through which the Holy Spirit works to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Office of Public Ministry is one of service, preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments. The Office of Deacon (including Directors of Parish Services, teachers, parish nurses and other professional church workers) is one of service to the pastor and the congregation as together they witness to Christ, The Servant of all.

### **True Wisdom**

Our institutions of higher learning prepare strong servants by teaching them where true wisdom and power lie.

12. The fact that we have institutions of higher learning supported by congregations implies that there is a need that our institutions fulfil that others cannot. Why do we need church-supported university colleges and seminaries? The theme verse that Concordia University College has operated under now for 80 years gets at the heart of the issue: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” (Proverbs 9:10; Psalm 111:10). What is true wisdom? In contrast, what is true folly (Psalm 14:1)?

13. How does this contrast with the way the world views wisdom and foolishness?

14. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18 - 25. Discuss what is wisdom and what is folly according to these passages. How should Christian Higher education be different from that of secular institutions? Why is it important that we have our own seminaries and university college to train future pastors and deacons?

### **Our Institutions of Higher Education**

Lutheran Church–Canada has three institutions of higher education where strong servants are prepared:

#### **Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta**

- Deacons
- Directors of Parish Services (DPS)
- Teachers
- Parish Nurses

#### **Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ontario and Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta**

- Pastors

(In addition, our institutions prepare servants for vocations other than full time church work.)

15. What can you as an individuals and as a congregation do to support our schools?

16. Likewise, what can you do as a congregation to support future servants of the church as they attend the church's schools of higher education?

17. If time permits, read the following mission statements of our schools and discuss how they reflect what we have learned today:

**The Mission Statement for Concordia University College of Alberta**

Founded in 1921, Concordia University College of Alberta is an accredited liberal arts university college of Lutheran Church–Canada. It is the mission of Concordia to offer a quality education in a Christian context while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, aiding students to develop a sense of vocation and preparing them for leadership in the world.

**A Mission Statement For Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ontario**

Because God would have no one perish, but all be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and, in order that we might obtain this faith, has instituted the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments,

therefore Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, exists to serve God's mission by preparing servants for the Holy Ministry of Word and Sacrament in order that people of every land might be brought to saving faith, be instructed in the divine doctrine, show forth the goodness of God, and be kept safe in faith to eternal life with their Lord.

**The Mission Statement for Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta**

Concordia Lutheran Seminary, a seminary of Lutheran Church - Canada, educates pastors and lay leaders, servants called and sent by the Holy Spirit, to witness to salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and to serve in God's world.

Theme verse: "For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Corinthians 4:5

**Close with prayer**

**Websites:**

Lutheran Church–Canada	<a href="http://www.lutheranchurch.ca">www.lutheranchurch.ca</a>
Concordia University College of Alberta	<a href="http://www.concordia.ab.ca">www.concordia.ab.ca</a>
Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary	<a href="http://www.brocku.ca/concordiaseminary">www.brocku.ca/concordiaseminary</a>
Concordia Lutheran Seminary	<a href="http://www.concordiasem.ab.ca">www.concordiasem.ab.ca</a>

# **Youth Bible Study**

## **January 20, 2002**

### **Leader's Guide**

This Bible study is the third part in the RSVP series which is designed to assist congregations in encouraging people to enter into a full-time church work position. In the first part, the focus was on the role of the family in nurturing church workers. Last year's focus was on the role of the congregation in encouraging future church workers. This year's focus is the role that our seminaries and our university college have in educating church workers.

This Bible study was written for young people in your congregation who are between the ages of 13 and 18. As a youth leader, I have gotten to know the youth in my church quite well, and have seen the gifts that each of them have. Our job is to encourage the youth to use these gifts in whichever profession they choose to follow, but also to encourage those with gifts that are suited for church work professions: pastors, teachers and directors of parish services (DPS). Keep your youth in your prayers, especially as you prepare for this Bible study, that the Holy Spirit would work in their hearts as they consider their future.

#### **Study Objectives:**

By working through this study, each youth will:

- identify some of the different ways that they are taught
- understand the trust that is required to learn from someone
- realize the importance of Christian education
- recognize the need to have a qualified teachers

#### **Materials:**

- Bibles
- a book written in a foreign language (Check with your pastor about a book in Greek or Hebrew!)
- blindfold
- chocolate bars
- copies of the cross picture
- scissors
- a catalogue/calendar or flyer from Concordia University College of Alberta and our two Lutheran seminaries

#### **Location:**

If possible, arrange for the Hidden Object activity to be done in an open room, or somewhere that doesn't contain too many objects to run into.